

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 106190 TOSEC 040148 POSS DUPE  
ORIGIN SS-25

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DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:JFC

APPROVED BY NEA - MR. SOBER

S/S - MR. SEBASTIAN

P-JFORBES

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TO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T STATE 106190 TOSEC 040148

EXDIS, PASS HABIB AND ATHERTON FROM SOBER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, IZ, US

SUBJECT: IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH IRAQ: PRESIDENTIAL  
MESSAGE

REF: SECTO 04015

1. WE BELIEVE THAT ANY PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO IRAQIS  
SHOULD BE ADDRESSED TO PRESIDENT BAKR, FROM ONE CHIEF OF  
STATE TO ANOTHER. THERE IS NO PRIMIN AND BAKR IS THEREFORE  
HEAD OF GOVERNMENT AS WELL. WHILE SADDAM HUSSEIN IS THE  
REGIME'S STRONGMAN, HE IS STILL A DEPUTY TO BAKR AS VICE  
CHAIRMAN OF THE RCC AND AS ASST. SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE  
BA'ATH REGIONAL COMMAND. ONLY IN BAKR'S ABSENCE FROM THE  
COUNTRY DOES HE TAKE ON THE CONTROVERSIAL TITLE OF ACTING  
PRESIDENT. IRAQI SUSPICIONS ARE SUCH THAT A PRESIDENTIAL  
SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 02 STATE 106190 TOSEC 040148 POSS DUPE

MESSAGE TO SADDAM HUSSEIN COULD BE INTERPRETED AS A SLAP  
AT BAKR OR AS AN EFFORT TO DOWNPLAY HIS ROLE RELATIVE TO  
THAT OF SADDAM HUSSEIN. WILEY'S INSTRUCTIONS  
SIMPLY SAY THAT HABIB WOULD HAVE A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT  
CARTER TO DELIVER TO SADDAM HUSSEIN, WITHOUT MAKING IT  
CLEAR TO WHOM THE MESSAGE ACTUALLY WOULD BE ADDRESSED.

2. WE THEREFORE SUGGEST THAT FOLLOWING PROPOSED PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE BE ADDRESSED TO BAKR:

BEGIN TEXT: AHMAD HASSAN AL-BAKR, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ, BAGHDAD

DEAR MR. PRESIDENT:

I CONSIDER IT ESSENTIAL THAT THE UNITED STATES FOLLOW A POLICY OF DEVELOPING THE WIDEST POSSIBLE GOOD RELATIONS WITH COUNTRIES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. TRADE AND COMMERCE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND IRAQ HAVE BEEN GROWING. MANY IRAQI STUDENTS STUDY IN THE UNITED STATES. I WOULD LIKE TO SEE A WIDENING OF THIS RELATIONSHIP INTO OTHER FIELDS.

I WAS THEREFORE GRATIFIED THAT YOUR GOVERNMENT AGREED TO RECEIVE MR. PHILIP C. HABIB, UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR POLITICAL AFFAIRS. I ASKED HIM TO ARRANGE FOR THE DELIVERY OF THIS MESSAGE TO YOU DURING HIS VISIT TO YOUR CAPITAL.

WITH MY FULL AUTHORITY, MR. HABIB IS PREPARED TO EXPLORE WITH YOUR GOVERNMENT VARIOUS WAYS IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES AND IRAQ MIGHT IMPROVE RELATIONS. A RELATIONSHIP WHICH WOULD ALLOW US TO EXCHANGE VIEWS MORE FULLY ON THE ISSUES WHICH ARE OF IMPORTANCE TO US BOTH WOULD BE, I AM CONFIDENT, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL. IT IS MY HOPE THAT YOU AND YOUR GOVERNMENT WILL IN THIS SAME SPIRIT DECIDE THAT THE TIME HAS ARRIVED FOR OUR TWO COUNTRIES TO MOVE TO A MORE NORMAL AND OPEN RELATIONSHIP. SINCERELY, JIMMY CARTER.

SECRET

SECRET

PAGE 03 STATE 106190 TOSEC 040148 POSS DUPE

END TEXT.

3. WE ARE SEPARATELY ASKING WILEY TO COMMENT TO YOU AND US ON PROPRIETY OF PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE TO SADDAM HUSSEIN RATHER THAN BAKR. WE SHOULD ALSO BEAR IN MIND THAT THERE IS AT LEAST AN OUTSIDE POSSIBILITY THAT BAKR HIMSELF - MIGHT RECEIVE HABIB, WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN FLAT ON HIS BACK FOR THE NEXT THREE WEEKS WITH HIS BACK PROBLEM. ONLY IN THE EVENT THAT SADDAM HUSSEIN INDICATED IN ADVANCE THAT HE PERSONALLY WOULD RECEIVE HABIB DO WE BELIEVE IT MIGHT BE SAFE TO ADDRESS THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE TO SADDAM HUSSEIN CHRISTOPHER

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## Message Attributes

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**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
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**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Sent Date:** 10-May-1977 12:00:00 am  
**Decaption Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
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**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH IRAQ: PRESIDENTIAL MESSAGE  
**TAGS:** PFOR, PPDC, IZ, US  
**To:** SECRETARY  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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